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Message Text

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PAGE 01 GENEVA 01428 302126 Z

62
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W
---------- 068213
O R 301540 Z MAR 73
FM USMISSION GENEVA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8562
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY LISBON

C O N F I D E N T I A L GENEVA 1428

EXDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (ADDITION OF CAPTION EXDIS)

FOR ASST SEC NEWSOM FROM AMB FERGUSON

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, XJ, OAU
SUBJECT: TALKS BETWEEN PORTUGAL AND AFRICA

REF: (A) ADDIS ABABA 3617, (B) STATE 056746

1. PURSUANT TO INSTRUCTIONS REFTELS, I SAW SAHNOUN
JUST PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE FROM GENEVA TO LONDON FRIDAY
A. M.

2. DRAWING ON REF (B) , I COVERED FOLLOWING POINTS:

(A) CIRCUMSTANCES U. S.- PORTUGUESE TALKS IN LISBON,
(B) ASST. SEC NEWSOM' S IMPRESSIONS OF PORTUGUESE CONCEPT
OF DEVELOPMENT FOR AFRICAN POPULATION, (C) EXPLANATION
OF U. S. POLICIES AND IMPORTANCE U. S. ATTACHES TO U. S.
RELATIONS WITH INDEPENDENT AFRICA , (D) U. S. G. FIRM
SUPPORT FOR PRINCIPLES NON- VIOLENT SELF- DETERMINATION,
(E) OUR VIEW OF DIFFICULTY AFRICANS HAD IN ACCEPTING
PRESENT PORTUGUESE POSITION AND CONCEPTION OF DIRECTION
OF MOVEMENT, (F) IMPORTANCE OF MUTUAL AFRICAN- PORTUGUESE
SETTLEMENT OF ISSUE OF PROPER DEFINITION OF SELF- DETERMINATION
AND (G) ANY MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE RESOLUTION TO BOTH SIDES
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ACCEPTABLE TO US.

3. I CONCLUDED BY INDICATING THAT SEC. NEWSOM' S BELIEF THAT SECRET EXPLORATORY CONTACT WITHOUT CONDITIONS ON EITHER SIDE WOULD BE USEFUL TO BOTH PORTUGUESE AND AFRICANS.

4. SAHNOUN RESPONDED BY INDICATING THAT HE READ SEC. NEWSOM' S IMPRESSIONS AS CONSISTENT WITH SIGNAL FROM PORTUGUESE TRANSMITTED THROUGH LORD HUME. IN THIS CONNECTION HE STATED THAT LORD HUME HAD CONVEYED TO HIM THE VIEW THAT THE PORTUGUESE WOULD BE WILLING TO ENTER INTO A DISCUSSION WITH AFRICAN STATES OR THE OAU. SAHNOUN STATED THAT HE REGARDED THIS AS SIGNIFICANT CHANGE OF POSITION OF PORTUGUESE SINCE HIS EARLIER IMPRESSION WAS PORTUGUESE WERE UNWILLING TO TALK TO OAU AS SUCH BUT WOULD ONLY BE WILLING TO TALK TO " NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES" ON SUCH MATTERS AS BORDER AND REFUGEE PROBLEMS. SAHNOUN ADDED THAT HE HAD REPORTED THE HUME SIGNAL TO THE SECRETARY- GENERAL OAU AND KING HASSAN. FURTHER KING HASSAN HAD GIVEN SECRETARIAT " GREEN LIGHT".

5. SAHNOUN ADDED THAT HE WOULD, OF COURSE, REPORT NEWSOM IMPRESSION TO SECRETARY- GENERAL OAU AND TO HASSAN IMMEDIATELY. HE WAS CERTAIN THAT REACTION OF BOTH WOULD BE POSITIVE.

6. SAHNOUN INDICATED THAT HIS OWN THINKING WAS OAU COULD TAKE RELATIVELY MODERATE POSITION VIS A VIS PORTUGAL INDICATING TO THEM THAT OAU UNDERSTOOD SELF- DETERMINATION WOULD PROCEED IN STAGES PARTICULARLY IN ORDER THAT PORTUGUAL COULD PROPERLY PREPARE THEIR OWN PUBLIC OPINION. HE FURTHER ADDED THAT IN HIS VIEW MERE FACT OF MEETING WOULD BE PROGRESS IN THAT PORTUGAL WOULD SEE OAU NOT " ARMED WITH KNIVES UP SLEEVES". IN THIS CONNECTION HE REFERRED TO THE FACT THAT ALGERIANS HAD FOUND IT NECESSARY TO HAVE SEVERAL SECRET CONTACTS WITH FRENCH BEFORE ANY MOVEMENT FOR SETTLEMENT CAME IN THAT CASE.

7. SAHNOUN STATED THAT HIS PERSONAL POSITION WAS THAT TALKS COULD GET UNDERWAY THIS SPRING IN MADRID OR TANGIER OR IF IN THE FALL AT THE UN. IN BOTH INSTANCES HE INDICATED CHOICE OF VENUE DICTATED BY NECESSITY ABSOLUTE SECRECY.
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8. IN EXCHANGE OF VIEWS AND SPECULATIONS WITH ME ABOUT GETTING TALKS OFF THE GROUND, I SUGGESTED TO SAHNOUN THAT FIRST ISSUE MIGHT WELL BE MUTUAL OAU- PORTUGUESE EXPLORATION OF RESPECTIVE POSITIONS ON MEANING SELF- DE-TERINATION. SAHNOUN INDICATED HE THOUGHT SUCH " FIRST AGENDA TOPIC" WAS THE ONLY POSSIBLE STARTING POINT IN ANY TALKS WITH PORTUGUESE. AGAIN, HE DREW PARALLE WITH HIS ALGERIAN EXPERIENCE VIS A VIS FRENCH INDICATING THAT AFTER INITIAL CONTACTS MADE FLEXIBILITY POSSIBLE ON BOTH SIDES.

9. FINALLY SAHNOUN REQUESTED THE VIEW OF ASST. SEC. NEWSOM AS TO WHETHER OAU SHOULD INFORM UN SYG NOW OR LEAVE TO A LATER STAGE. HE OBSERVED THAT IF UN INFORMED NOW, LIKELHOOD OF MAINTAINING SECRECY REMOTE BUT ON OTHER HAND IF SYG NOT INFORMED RUN GRAVE RISK OF MISUNDERSTANDING OR GIVING THE APPEARANCE OF SLIGHTING SYG. HE STATED ANSWER TO THIS QUERY OF SOME URGENCY SINCE HE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE ADVICE FOR HASSAN WHEN HE (SAHNOUN) INFORMS HUSSAN OF NEWSOM IMPRESSIONS.

10. SAHNOUN INDICATED THAT HE WOULD BE IN LONDONUNTIL TUESDAY AND IF NECESSARY CAN BE CONTACTED THROUGH ALGERIAN MISSION. RIMESTAD.

NOTE: EXDIS CAPTION ADDED PER S/ SO MR. KURZE

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